

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 27, 2006**

**2006-0043 – Cingular Wireless** [Applicant] **Sunnyvale School District** [Owner]: Application for a Use Permit on an 11.2-acre site to allow a new 50-foot tree pole telecommunication facility with six panel antennas and associated ground equipment. The property is located at **450 North Sunnyvale Avenue** (Bishop Elementary School near E Maude Ave) in a P-F (Public Facility) Zoning District. (Negative Declaration) (APN: 204-36-001) RK

**Chair Hungerford** recused himself as he has a financial interest in the outcome of the issue. He said Comm. Babcock has agreed to serve as the Chair on this item. Chair Hungerford left the Council Chambers.

**Ryan Kuchenig**, Associate Planner, presented the staff report. He said staff finds that the facility as conditioned (in the Conditions of Approval, COAs) should blend in with nearby trees and provide a natural backdrop. He said staff finds the current design acceptable and was able to make the findings and recommends approval subject to the COAs.

**Comm. Klein** referred to the "Design:" section of page 4 of the report regarding "flush mounted antennas would not allow the facility to operate effectively." He asked if this was normal for a tree mono pole in general. Mr. Kuchenig said from his experience that the flush mounted design does not work on these types of tree poles. Comm. Klein said on the same page of the report that a site is referenced, "a location across Maude Avenue was considered previously by the applicant..." and asked what location this refers to. **Gerri Caruso**, Principal Planner, said that at the end of Sunnyvale Avenue at Maude there is a small commercial center and that an application to put an antenna behind the center was submitted, but was eventually withdrawn.

**Comm. Simons** asked about the 24" pole diameter that is limited and if that pole size would allow for two additional carriers. Mr. Kuchenig said that the pole would allow for two more carriers along with the applicant. Comm. Simons confirmed with staff that if the pole was 30" that it would still allow the same number as the 24" pole so it would not be beneficial to go to the larger 30" size. Mr. Kuchenig commented that any future proposal would have to go through the same use permit process.

**Comm. Simons** clarified with staff that any future applicant would have to go through the same use permit process as this application and asked if there was any policy that would allow the future carriers to pass the permit process. Ms. Caruso, said the code requires that each individual carrier have their own use permit.

**Chair Babcock opened the public hearing.**

**Kelly Pepper**, representative for Cingular Wireless, said that the proposal is to install a Cingular Wireless facility at Bishop Elementary School as the area currently has poor coverage around the site. She said when Cingular found a coverage hole in the area, it determined that a facility in the East Maude and N. Sunnyvale Avenue would fill in the hole. She said Cingular had originally submitted an application for a different site, but the conditions of the first site did not work resulting in this application for the Bishop Elementary School site. She said the proposal is to install six antennas on a new 50-foot monopine at the north edge of the school with the equipment cabinet adjacent on the ground in an enclosed fenced wood structure. The monopine will be visible, but the antennas will be screened by the branches. She said the facility is designed to meet the coverage in the site and be visually unobtrusive. She said the facility will operate well below the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) limits and the before and after measurements will be provided as conditioned by staff. She said she and other representatives related to the application were available for questions.

**Comm. Simons** asked Ms. Pepper how many co-located antennas could be placed on this facility. She said structurally the facility can be built to support as many carriers as desired. She said the diameter of the pole has been designed to put the cables inside the pole and can allow one to two additional carriers to put the cables inside. She said in theory, additional carriers, beyond the two, could put their cables on the outside of the pole. Comm. Simons asked why Cingular decided on the 50-foot pole height. Ms. Pepper said 50 feet allows Cingular to have the necessary line of site to their adjacent facilities, provides the needed coverage and also complies with the 2-to-1 setback from the residential property across the street.

**Chair Babcock closed the public hearing.**

**Comm. Simons** asked staff about camouflaged antennas and if we had ever had any other carriers put their extra hardware on the outside of this type of facility. Ms. Caruso said that she thought there had been only one other camouflaged tree pole approved in Sunnyvale and that it is still being installed and would not have additional carriers yet. Comm. Simons questioned whether the diameter of the tree pole is defeating the purpose of making the tree pole aesthetically pleasing as possible. Mr. Kuchenig said that staff was provided a range of sizes of poles and thought that the 24" pole would look the best. Comm. Simons and staff discussed tree poles and how to best assure that cabling is not put on the outside of the tree poles. Ms. Caruso said that a condition could be included that would require that as part of the aesthetics of the approval that outside cabling would not be allowed to reach the antennae level. Ms. Caruso added that every time a new application comes in, the condition would be a part of the review. Comm. Simons and staff further discussed eternal cabling, the diameter of the

tree pole and that the pole should preferably look like a pine rather than a larger species.

**Comm. Klein** clarified that staff's recommendation was to include a COA regarding the aesthetics of the tree and confirmed that any future additions to the tree would have to come before the Planning Commission.

**Comm. Simons** moved for Alternative 2, to adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the Use Permit with modified conditions; to replace COA 3.A.2 with the following language, "Staff to determine the minimum diameter of the trunk of a tree pole that would allow up to an additional two carriers. Based on the resulting diameter, staff is to determine the visually appropriate tree species that would accommodate the trunk." **Comm. Klein** seconded.

**Final Action:**

**Comm. Simons** made a motion on 2006-0043 to adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the Use Permit with modified conditions; to replace Condition of Approval (COA) 3.A.2 with the following language, "Staff to determine the minimum diameter of the trunk of a tree pole that would allow up to an additional two carriers. Based on the resulting diameter, staff is to determine the visually appropriate tree species that would accommodate the trunk." **Comm. Klein** seconded.

Motion carried unanimously, 4-0, Chair Hungerford recused himself, Vice Chair Fussell absent.

This item is appealable to City Council no later than March 14, 2006.